

IN THE ABSTRACT

Page 18, lines 3-11 have been amended as follows:

An apparatus ~~and method~~ for stacking incoming items. ~~The apparatus~~ includes a receiving mechanism for receiving incoming items, a stacking mechanism for receiving items from the receiving mechanism and stacking the items in a stacking area, a buffering mechanism for receiving incoming items when the stacking mechanism is full, and a stack unloading mechanism. ~~The method includes~~ Methods of operation include receiving an item in an item receiving mechanism, moving the item receiving mechanism to track the motion of a stacking mechanism, transferring the item from the receiving mechanism to the stacking mechanism, stacking the item in a stacking area, and unloading the stacking area when the stacking area is full of items.